

Unable to attend the hearing on bill, S.B. 946, section 29, I provide the following testimony: as a long-time Connecticut resident, I can remember when there were areas filled with woods and trees and wildlife--areas that were less populated with people, for sure. Over time, as developers have no other interest than profit, no incentive to preserve or restore already used building areas, these wild habitats have been overrun, creating many endangered species and hardship on wildlife, more pollution and congestion for people. I encourage the Connecticut General Assembly's Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee to consider supporting the continued allocation of funds to the Community Investment Act, which allows the state to continue to preserve land.

I want to reiterate the state goal for open space:

"The State's overall goal is to preserve 21% of Connecticut's land as open space by the year 2023, a total of 673,210 acres. The initiative includes 10% of open space to be state owned as additions to the State's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries and natural resource management areas, with the remaining 11% owned by municipalities, private nonprofit land conservation organizations, water companies and the federal government. As of October 2010, 73% of this goal has been achieved through the direct purchase of open space by the state and through state support for local acquisitions." (Source DEP website)

In order to reach these goals or even do better than these, then we need to continue the funds for communities to invest in preservation.

I want to leave you with this image I have: last fall, I was out for a walk, in an area that used to be woods, and is now being developed into houses. The area wasn't very big to begin with, but leveled, it took out a block or two of trees. As I was walking, I noticed the hoof prints of a single deer. I followed them from the treeline, to the curb. It was apparant that the deer had once roamed the area, and now no longer could cut across to the next patch of trees, because of the new road and house; the hoof prints, turned back and retreated into a sparse area of woods, near more houses.

There are real animals and people effected everyday when laws are made that don't benefit preservation, clean air, water, and resources to benefit our natural world. We do need it; it takes care of us.

Equally, I would encourage you to not only support keeping the funds in the Community Investment Act, but to consider supporting measures that will force/encourage developers to build in areas that are not pristine woods, but rather already have buildings and asphalt on it--restore the areas that already have buildings instead of encroaching further on the little open space we have left in this state.

Thank you for hearing this testimony.

Sincerely,  
Elyse Falk  
Bristol, CT